

Announcements:

- ANNOUNCE anything that our Teen Ministry is doing (community service events, weekend events, series for midweek, etc.)

Faith and Deeds

Hebrews 11:1-2

Faith is “being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see”

- Dictionary.com—confidence or trust in a person or thing; belief in God or in the doctrines/teachings of a religion; belief that is not based on proof

Q - Why is faith important? How does faith play a role in our relationship with God?

Q - Think about your own life-what are some ways faith has played a role in your life personally?

This chapter of Hebrews gives examples of certain “Heroes of Faith” from the Old Testament including Abel, Enoch, Noah, Moses, Rahab, and more. We’re going to read about Abraham’s example of faith.

Hebrews 11:17-19

This paragraph is describing the story of Abraham and Isaac.

- Background—Abraham and his wife Sarah had tried to have children for a long time. Finally, when Abraham was 100 years old, he and his wife had a boy named Isaac. When Isaac had grown into a teenager or young man, God called Abraham and told him to sacrifice his son as a burnt offering. Abraham obeyed prepared to sacrifice his son. As he was about to kill Isaac, Abraham was stopped by God and commended for his faith.

Abraham was able to sacrifice his son because he had faith that God could raise Isaac from the dead.

- **Q - Do you think it was easy for Abraham to have faith in this situation?**
 - If it were me, I know I would be struggling, questioning God and his command, hesitant, etc.
- **Q - What can make having faith a challenging thing?**
- **Q - Has it ever been hard for you to have faith?**

Q - Now that we see the importance of faith in our relationship with God, is faith all we need as we try to be Christians?

Q - What if we don’t have *any* faith?! How can we increase our faith?

James 2:17-24

This passage says “faith by itself, if not accompanied by action, is dead.”

- We obviously need faith in our relationship with God, but that’s not the whole equation. God says we also need action and “deeds.”

Passage uses the same example as before. We know that Abraham had faith and believed God could raise his son from the dead, but his faith wasn’t made complete until he acted on it.

- **Q - What does this mean practically? How does God expect us to act on our faith?**

- John 8:31-34—To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³²Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Q - Many people who call themselves Christians today think that faith is all you need. Why do you think this is?

Q - Some of us need to stop pretending - some of us say we believe in God and we want to follow God, but our actions tell a completely different story. Stop pretending and get real with yourself.

Conclusion

- We need to have faith in order to have a strong relationship with God. Faith is what we build our relationship with God on, from having faith that he'll bless and help us to believing in the very existence of God.
- Second, faith is not enough—in fact, without action, faith is dead and worthless. God also calls us to act on our faith and to put his commands into practice in our lives.

CHALLENGE:

- Examine your life. Do you have faith, or are you struggling in believing in God and his plan for your life?
- Second, are you putting that faith into action and living as God wants you to live?